

3. Student Academic Portfolios

Portfolios basically tell a story about your child by looking at the work completed at beginning of the year all the way through to the end. Projects and activities through out the year are also documented within the portfolio. The format of your child's portfolio is up to you. Here are some suggested that you may like to include.

Observation Records – These records can be use to target a certain skill or behavior. Decide what that desired skill or behavior will be, teach and reinforce this skill or behavior. Chart progress with the observation record.

Self-evaluation Surveys - Have the child complete a reflective survey on how well he/she has completed a project, writing assignment, activity, reading assignment, etc. This will allow you to find areas you may need to work on.

My Best Work – Allow children to have a Best Work section. This section will include pieces of work they think reflects his/her best effort (something that took a long time), shows growth (something new that you have learned), personal interest, etc. Have them write a reason describing why they chose the piece. (these can be stapled to the entry.)

Compliments – When you have several children in your household, have them write compliments on each others on projects completed. This feedback can be help for to both parties. This is also a good activity to complete during support group displays, science fairs, co-ops, etc.

Reading Records – Keep a list of books read over the course of the year. You may even require a summary of books read independently.

Memory Verse Records – Keep a list of verses learned over the course of the year. This will help you add to the list next year and review from this year.

Photos – Pictures of the children participating in activities are great to include. As an added writing project, have them write a description to go along with the picture.

Journals – Offering suggestions for students to write about is usually the best way to approach journal writing. Having them write responses about an activity, project, etc. they have just completed is also another good way to encourage journal writing. There are several books available to offer suggestions on journal topics.

Handwriting Samples – It is a good idea to have your child write the same sentence, paragraph, etc. at various point during the year. This will give you an idea of the child's progress in this area. (This can easily be done on Portfolio Day- see below)

Writing Samples – Include varies types of writing: short stories, letters, descriptions, factual, poetry, character descriptions, etc.

Portfolio Day – Spend time teaching organization. Designate time to organize and reflect on work completed. On Portfolio Day or Notebook Day, take time to organize work. Add a table of contents, color tabs, dividers, etc. Take time to complete surveys, review work, select work samples, write evaluations and plan for the future. This will allow you time to see what has been accomplished and where you need to go from here. Take time talking to your child about his/her work. This is an important part of learning. You can even plan a time of sharing with family and friends.